

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—FEBRUARY 3, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **Governor Banwarilal Purohit – delivered his customary address to the assembly on February 2**
- ✓ The one-hour long speech marked the beginning of the last session of 15th assembly in the New Year
- ✓ During the address, the Governor mentioned Tamil Nadu was “one of the best administered states” in the country
- ✓ He highlighted various policy initiatives of the government, including 7.5% NEET quota for government school students.

NEW POLICIES

➤ CM helpline number 1100 to access the government from the comfort of homes

➤ Homeless families to get a concrete-roofed house in rural areas and an apartment in a multi-storied building in urban areas

➤ New industrial policy has been approved by the government and will be unveiled shortly to provide a fillip to industrial growth

➤ A new MSME policy has been finalised and will be released by the chief minister shortly

➤ Fresh additional capital of ₹1,000cr over three years to TIIC to expand



Rapt Audience: Governor Banwarilal Purohit addresses the assembly on Tuesday

lending operations

➤ A state action plan for senior citizens will be implemented shortly

➤ The minorities commission will be expanded through legislation to provide representation to linguistic minorities

- ✓ The Governor announced the rollout of the ‘BharatNet project’ – the rural broadband connectivity programme -- to one third of the revenue villages in the state by March 31, and the remaining villages by November 30, 2021

- ✓ He said that a new convergent digital service delivery platform – Unified Digital Infrastructure -- will be built exclusively for the programme
 - ✓ The new platform will integrate BharatNet with TNSWAN, TamilNet and TACTV's broadcast infrastructure
 - ✓ It aims to deliver high speed, scalable bandwidth to all households in the state.
 - ✓ The Governor praised the government for attracting an “unprecedented” ₹60,674 crore worth investments through 73 MoUs, generating employment for one lakh people, all during the pandemic
 - ✓ The State Minorities Commission would be expanded through legislation to provide representation to linguistic minorities, he said.
 - ✓ The state government also demanded that the Centre reject Karnataka's Mokedatu dam project at the inter-state border, and not to allow Kerala to build a new dam across Periyar river.
 - ✓ It sought Central assistance of ₹5,264 crore to compensate the damage caused by two cyclones – Nivar and Burevi - recently and urged the Centre to take up the fishermen issue with Sri Lanka.
 - ✓ According to the Governor, the state received ₹13,300 crore towards compensation from the Centre
 - ✓ This includes ₹4,890 crore towards borrowings in lieu of compensation as per the mechanism put in place by the GST council.
 - ✓ The assembly session will conclude on February 5, 2021
- **The State government – to infuse an additional capital of ₹1,000 crore into the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC) over three years**
- ✓ The move will help the agency to function as an effective term-lending institution and expand lending to MSME units that have no access to institutional credit
 - ✓ This was announced by the Governor Banwarilal Purohit in the Assembly on February 2.
 - ✓ His announcement was in line with the recommendations of an expert committee, led by former RBI Governor C. Rangarajan
 - ✓ The committee was constituted to suggest ways to help important sectors of the economy overcome the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and promote further growth.
 - ✓ The Governor also said that a new MSME policy had been finalised during consultations with stakeholders, and it would be released by the Chief Minister shortly.
- **Tamil Nadu - has been provided ₹773.24 crore in financial support under the India COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Package**
- ✓ This was revealed by Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Ashwini Kumar Choubey as a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on February 2

- ✓ Under the package, ₹6,309.9 crore had been released to the States and the Union Territories, through the National Health Mission as on January 15.
 - ✓ Totally, 18.66 lakh N-95 masks and 5.39 lakh PPE kits had been procured centrally and distributed in Tamil Nadu.
 - ✓ Further, 3,625 oxygen cylinders had been distributed in the State as on January 24.
 - ✓ The State was given 1,52,700 Truenat COVID cartridges and 14,000 Xpert COVID cartridges as on January 24.
 - ✓ Besides, about 6.4 lakh Covid-19 diagnostic kits had been supplied to Tamil Nadu as on January 24.
 - ✓ A total of 18 diagnostic machines had been supplied to the State.
 - ✓ A total of 1,450 ventilators had been distributed to Tamil Nadu, out of which 1,447 of them had been installed.
 - ✓ The vaccination drive was aimed at covering 5,32,605 healthcare workers in Tamil Nadu
- **The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) - is planning to build Chennai's fourth integrated mofussil bus terminus at Kuthambakkam village, near Thirumazhisai.**

One more transport hub

Chennai's fourth integrated bus terminus will come up on 25 acres of land at Kuthambakkam near Thirumazhisai. The following are the highlights of the project

Project cost: ₹314 crore

Total area: 1 lakh square metres	Built up area: 40,000 square metres	Green cover: 15,000 square metres	Car parking: 10,000 square metres
--	---	---	---

Other facilities: Sewage and effluent treatment plants

Capacity of the terminus: 225 buses



An artist's impression of the Kuthambakkam bus terminus

- ✓ The proposed integrated bus terminus will be constructed in over 25 acres of land at an outlay of ₹314 crore
- ✓ It will look to ease traffic congestion in Koyambedu and provide the much-needed public transport facility to nearly 40,000 people working in the industrial complexes, including SIPCOT.
- ✓ The integrated bus terminus, built on the lines of the one at Kilambakkam, will be completed within 18 months.

- ✓ With an area of 1 lakh sq m, the bus terminal would have two cellar floors for parking facility, ground floor for shops and booking offices, a mezzanine floor and a first floor.
 - ✓ It would also have a sewage treatment plant, an effluent treatment plant, a RO plant, rooms for the crew, toilets, shopping area and dormitory.
 - ✓ It will have the capacity to accommodate 225 buses, including those of private operators, State Transport Corporation and Metropolitan Transport Corporation
 - ✓ More than 15% (4 acres) of the 25 acre site would be allotted for greenery and 10% (2.5 acres) for car parking.
 - ✓ A separate water tank, a vehicle washing area, a workshop, an electricity substation and a petrol pump were planned on the premises.
 - ✓ At present, Dr. MGR bus terminus in Koyambedu is in operation and the Madhavaram bus terminus has been completed
 - ✓ The two bus termini, one at Kilambakkam and the other at Kuthambakkam, were intended to serve as transport hubs in the south and west sections
- **India's first wetland conservation centre – to come up in Chennai**
- ✓ The Centre for Wetland Conservation and Management (CWCM) will act as a knowledge hub for various stakeholders for conserving wetlands that occupy 4.6% of the country's total land area
 - ✓ The CWCM has been set up as a part of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai.
 - ✓ This national centre is an institution under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.
 - ✓ It will assist the national and state/UT governments in the design and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks, management planning, monitoring and targeted research for conservation of wetlands
 - ✓ This was announced by the environment ministry on the eve of World Wetlands Day
 - ✓ At present, India has 42 sites designated as wetlands of international importance under Ramsar convention, covering a surface area of 1.08 million hectares.
 - ✓ The year 2021 also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands on February 2, 1971 in Ramsar, Iran.
 - ✓ The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), on the occasion, launched community-based programmes to raise awareness about conservation and rejuvenation of 10 wetlands in each of over 50 districts along the river under its flagship 'Namami Gange' mission.
 - ✓ The 'Namami Gange' is the first of its kind programme where wetland conservation is integrated with the river basin management plan.
 - ✓ February 2 is observed as World Wetlands Day every year to highlight the importance of conservation of wet lands

➤ **A 14th century inscription mentioning a temple deity - was found near Thondi in Ramanathapuram district**

- ✓ The inscription mentioned the name of the deity as Puravuvvari Vinnakara Peruyan, where 'Puravuvvari' referring to land tax
- ✓ Dating to 1329, the inscription was found in the sanctum sanctorum of Garudhazhvar in the Uthipootha Perumal temple
- ✓ The stone inscription contains 35 lines of which the first and last lines have been erased.



- ✓ It was carved during the 15th regnal year of Sri Parakrama Pandiyan, who ruled between 1315 and 1334.
- ✓ Puravuvvari is the land tax collected by the king, and the deity has been named so.
- ✓ Usually, a temple for the deity Vishnu is called Vinnakara.
- ✓ In another development, an archaeological team from Tirupur found two 13th century and one 17th century hero stones at Vinnampallai village near Pujappulliyampatti-Sathiyamangalam highways in Erode district.
- ✓ Based on the sculpture's dressing style and hairstyle, it is estimated to be at least 800 years old

STATES

➤ **Kerala - to open its first Human Milk Bank (HMB) on February 5, 2021**

- ✓ The new facility will be opened at the Ernakulam general hospital by the Health Minister of Kerala, KK Shailaja.
- ✓ It has been set up at a cost of ₹35 lakh following a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed between the state health department and Rotary Club of Cochin Global in the year 2020.
- ✓ The milk bank will ensure the availability of the breast milk for new-born babies who are not breastfed by their own mothers who are sick or deceased or due to insufficient production of breast milk.
- ✓ The pasteurized breast milk from the milk bank will reduce the risk of infections and help in boosting the immunity of newborns.
- ✓ The milk will be collected by following all the safety protocols and procedures
- ✓ The collected milk will be stored for 6 months safely in the bank.
- ✓ It will be preserved and provided to needy children as per government guidelines.

- ✓ The milk will be provided free of cost initially to those babies who are admitted in the neonatal intensive care unit.
- ✓ The milk will be donated by the mothers from the hospital who have delivered babies
- ✓ This human milk bank comprises of a pasteurization unit, deep freezers, refrigerators, sterilizing equipment, RO plant, and computers.
- ✓ The Indian Medical Association (IMA) and the Indian Association of Pediatricians (IAP) will be providing trained nursing staff to operate the milk bank.

NATIONAL

- **For the first time ever, the Finance Commission - has created the provision for ₹8,000 crore incentive for eight states to develop one new city in each state as a pilot project.**
 - ✓ The housing and urban affairs ministry will come up with the framework for this.
 - ✓ The 15th Finance Commission stressed about the need for both rejuvenation of old cities and setting up of new cities.
 - ✓ The grant available for each proposed new city is ₹1,000 crore and a state can have only one new city under the proposed scheme
 - ✓ Another recommendation by the panel is to fix price for water on a graded basis
 - ✓ Accordingly, higher consumption means higher charges and periodic revision of the charges will also be undertaken
 - ✓ The Union budget has announced the launch of a ₹2.64 lakh crore scheme to provide universal household tap water connection to all houses across 4,378 municipal areas by 2026.
- **The PGIMER, Chandigarh - has launched the country's first ever 'PGI Amputee Clinic'.**



- ✓ The clinic was inaugurated by the PGIMER Director Professor Jagat Ram.
- ✓ It was set up to improve the amputation patient care by providing them various services with significant coordination.
- ✓ Under this initiative, the amputee will be taken care of and treated to become a near normal functional human being.

- ✓ The clinic will provide appropriate management to the amputees so as to guide them in their path of rehabilitation in society.
 - ✓ This is done by a team of occupational therapists and a psychologist who gets involved in amputee patient care.
 - ✓ The clinic would provide a platform for future research and provides the essential information about the burden, long-term complications and rehabilitation issues of the amputees.
- **The NITI Aayog - has recently released its plan document for Little Andaman titled “Sustainable Development of Little Andaman Island Vision Document”.**
- ✓ The Little Andaman is a 680 sq km fragile Island in the Andaman and Nicobar island group.
 - ✓ In the year 2020, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi declared that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands will be developed as a “maritime and start-up hub”.
 - ✓ The document by NITI Aayog has been formulated to reach the goal set out by the PM.
 - ✓ The Vision Document has been developed to achieve the twin objectives of getting investments to the region and to provide a better infrastructure and connectivity to the island to enhance its military and naval
 - ✓ The NITI Aayog is planning to build a new greenfield coastal city, which will also act as a free trade zone.
 - ✓ The developmental plan has been divided into three zones:
 - ✓ Zone 1 is being developed as the monetary district and is spread over 102 sq km in the east coast of Little Andaman.
 - ✓ Zone 2 is a leisure zone that is spread over 85 sq km of pristine forest.
 - ✓ Zone 3 would be a nature zone and spread over 52 sq km of pristine forest.
 - ✓ The little Andaman is is the fourth largest island in Andamans.
 - ✓ It is famous for the largest settlement on the island called Hut Bay, also known as the Kwate-tu-kwage.
 - ✓ The island is home to Onge Tribes apart from other multilingual settlers of Bengali, Telugu, Tamil and Ranchi communities.
 - ✓ It is located at about a distance of 120 Kilometers by sea from the Port Blair.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Russian Covid-19 vaccine Sputnik V – has shown an efficacy of 91.6% against symptomatic Covid-19 in a two-dose regimen, as per the medical journal Lancet**
- ✓ The 91.6% efficacy was seen 21 days after the first dose of giving the vaccine, which has to be stored at 2-8°C for global distribution
 - ✓ The makers of the vaccine are planning an emergency use authorisation (EUA) rollout in India in March

- ✓ The peer-reviewed journal published interim analysis data of Phase III trials of the vaccine involving over 20,000 persons in Russia on February 2
- ✓ As per a sub-analysis of over 2,000 participants aged over 60 years, the vaccine was found to be similarly effective and well tolerated in the elderly as well.
- ✓ The Phase 3 trials were held between September 7 and November 24, 2020 at 25 sites in Moscow
- ✓ The Sputnik V vaccine uses a different technology from the one used by Oxford-AstraZeneca.
- ✓ AstraZeneca uses the same adenovirus vector to carry the genetic material into cells
- ✓ Sputnik V vaccine uses two different adenovirus vectors – adenovirus 26 (Ad26) for the first dose and adenovirus 5 (Ad5) for the second dose – to carry the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein.
- ✓ Using two varying serotypes of adenovirus is intended to overcome any pre-existing adenovirus immunity in the population.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **A team of researchers at the University of Washington - have recently created a new protein-based biosensor that will detect the Coronavirus**
- ✓ The team is led by David Baker, who is the professor of biochemistry and director of the Institute for Protein Design at UW Medicine
- ✓ The protein-based biosensors will detect the proteins that make up the coronavirus.
- ✓ It would also help in detecting the antibodies against it.
- ✓ These biosensors will recognize the specific molecules on the surface of the virus.
- ✓ The protein will bind to them and then emit the light through a biochemical reaction.
- ✓ The biosensor will glow when mixed with components of the specific coronavirus
- ✓ The RT-PCR technique amplifies the genetic material from the virus in order to make them visible.
- ✓ This technique is used to measure the amount of a specific RNA.
- ✓ However, the technique requires specialized staff and equipment.

DEFENCE

- **Defence Minister, Rajnath Singh - has inaugurated a new plant for the production of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) at the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Bengaluru.**
- ✓ This 35-acre plant will help to double the production of India's indigenous fighter jet, LCA Tejas, to 16 aircrafts per year.
- ✓ The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited is to sign an order of Rs 48,000 crore from the armed forces to produce 83 jets during the Aero India 2021 show

- ✓ During the inauguration, the minister highlighted that India will reach its target of Rs 1.75 lakh crore in the defence manufacturing soon



- ✓ This is the first time that Indian private players have joined together to produce the aircraft wings and fuselage.
 - ✓ It is expected that the project will create 5,000 primary jobs in the private sector.
 - ✓ The order for 83 LCA's will be completed by 2030
 - ✓ Tejas is an Indian single-engine, fourth-generation and multirole light fighter.
 - ✓ It is designed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and the Aircraft Research and Design Centre (ARDC) of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.
 - ✓ The LCA was officially named as “Tejas” in 2003.
- **The Aero India 2021 show - will start from February 3, 2021 in Bengaluru, Karnataka.**



- ✓ During the show, a deal will be signed with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for Rs 48,000 crore to manufacture the 83 indigenous Teja Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-73
- ✓ The first aircraft under the deal will be handed over in the next three years
- ✓ Further, the Aero India Show will include the defence ministers' conclave of countries of the Indian Ocean Region.

- ✓ The conclave will witness the participation of 28 countries, with 19 ministers and representatives will be present at the event while nine will attend it virtually
- ✓ The show will conclude on February 5, 2021.
- ✓ The Aero India exhibition is organized every alternate year.
- ✓ It is one of the major exhibitions for the aerospace and defence industries with the public air show.
- ✓ This is the 13th edition of Aero India, which will provide opportunity to demonstrate the products to the potential customer and investors.
- ✓ It will be joined by 600 exhibitors, including 80 foreign companies that would showcase the defence manufacturing prowess.
- ✓ The logo for aero India 2021 is inspired by the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA).
- ✓ The core motif of the logo is the tri-coloured silhouette of the Tejas LCA with the Ashok Chakra in the centre.

SPORTS

- **New Zealand - became the first team to qualify for the inaugural World Test Championship final, to be held at Lord's in England from June 18 to 22**
- ✓ The upcoming India-England four-Test series will decide which team joins New Zealand in the final – India, England or Australia

WTC POINTS TABLE

Rank	Team	PCT (%)	Points	Series	Matches	Won	Lost	Drawn
1	India	71.7	430	5	13	9	3	1
2	New Zealand	70.0	420	5	11	7	4	0
3	Australia	69.2	332	4	14	8	4	2
4	England	68.7	412	5	17	10	4	3
5	Pakistan	37.7	226	5.5*	11	3	5	3
6	South Africa	34.3	144	4*	10	3	7	0
7	Sri Lanka	16.7	80	4	8	1	6	1
8	West Indies	11.1	40	3	7	1	6	0
9	Bangladesh	0	0	1.5	3	0	3	0

PCT is points earned/points available | * indicates ongoing series

SOURCE: ICC

- ✓ Australia had recently announced the pulling out of their South Africa tour because of the outbreak of a fresh Covid-19 wave in South Africa
- ✓ The decision virtually knocks the Aussies out of contention from the final to be played later this year.
- ✓ At this stage, Australia (69.17%) are marginally behind New Zealand (70%) on the points table.
- ✓ India (71.70%) and England (68.67%) play each other and only one of them can exceed New Zealand's percentage points.

